

it was this that brought him to seek counsel of Webb with a view to devising some practicable method of reaching the desired end At an early conversation between the two friends on this point, Haldane is said to have asked Webb "What is >our idea of a University?" He smiled "I haven't any idea of a Unueisity Let's sit down and see what we can make of it Here are the facts

What we want, it seems to me, is an Act enlarging the existing University so as to give it a powerful teaching side That will grow In the end, it will, by sheer quality of performance, absorb the purely examination side " As

Lord Haldane puts it in his *Autobiography*

" Sidney Webb and I took counsel together He was a very practical as well as a -very energetic man We laid siege to the citadel We went round to poison aftei person who was promi- nent in the administration of the existing University Some list- ened, but otheis would not do so and even refused to see us In the end, we worked out what was in substance the scheme of the London University Act of 1898 The scheme was far from being an ideal one It provided by way of compromise for a Senate which was too large to be a ieall> efficient governing body for the new supieme University, and it had other shortcomings of which we were well aware But we saw that the scheme thus fashioned was the utmost we could hope foi the time to carry, in the existing state of public opinion about higher education in London "

On all this, there was not only very close association with Haldane but a fairly constant association with Balfour "We came together," says Haldane,

"because the Libeials were not up to the mark about questions

of Higher Education I was so keen about
them that I did not
mind accepting the opportunity of throwing
myself on Balfour's
side on them "

This applied even more strongly to Sidney
Webb Per-
meation was, at this period, at its high-
water mark, he
was ready to co-operate with any efficient
agent to get
good work done The Act of 1898 went
through, thanks